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ASPIRA parents triumph in elections

Ten parent participants of the ASPIRA Parents for Educational Excellence Program (APEX) won 13 seats in local November elections for school committees in Chicago.

According to ASPIRA of Illinois APEX coordinator Nereida Alvarez, "The parents were initially shy and hesitant during the APEX training sessions. It took them three training sessions before they became responsive. Now they are on the road to changing policy in their children's schools."

Eight APEX parents will sit on the Local School Councils of Clemente High School, Chopin and Cameron Elementary Schools. In addition, an APEX parent will assume the presidency, and three others will sit on the Bilingual Committee of Chopin Elementary School, while another parent will work in a Chapter One committee.

"We are extremely pleased and proud of the accomplishments of APEX parents in Chicago," said Providence Rodriguez-Floresca, National Project Director of the APEX Program. "Our objective for the

first year of the program was to involve parents within the community in the education of their children. We anticipated that they would eventually become part of the policy making process in the schools. The parents in Chicago basically said 'WE ARE READY NOW' and took action."

APEX parents posted flyers and solicited community support for their candidacy through door to door campaigning.

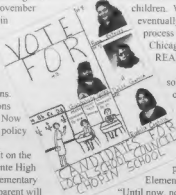
"We would like to see more parents involved. We want everyone to work together," said Delia Garcia, a parent elected to the Chopin

Elementary School Local School Council. "Until now, no one participated. We didn't work together. Now we do."

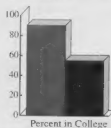
Mildred Bernal, newly elected president of the Bilingual Committee and member of the Chopin Elementary Local School Council, said she had been involved in the schools for 12 years but the training APEX provided was very helpful. She added that she wanted to get more parent involvement in her school because she felt that led to more success.

"We have a real need for parent involvement," said Bernal. "I have tried to do this by presenting more activities but it doesn't always work. Parents need to realize that they don't need to be afraid."

APEX trainers provided parents with information and practice in dealing with such issues as educational rights, immigration issues and schools, school structure and placement of students, tracking of students, GED programs, and community problems. In addition to



Aspirantes Continue Education



According to recent data, 90% of Aspirante seniors are continuing their education after high school. The national average for all Hispanic seniors is 55.2%.



ASPIRANTES
All Other Hispanics

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Director's Corner



As you may already know, this is the last

Director's Corner that will bear my byline. After nine years at ASPIRA, over five as National Executive Director, I will be moving on to begin a new job as Program Officer at The Ford Foundation's Division of Education and Culture.

These have been years of great learning and challenges. They have been years of great accomplishments:

- ◆ new programs of parent and community mobilization, mathematics and science careers,
- ◆ the creation of a national ASPIRA alumni association,
- ◆ the opening of the first new affiliate since 1981 (ASPIRA of Connecticut),
- ◆ the restructuring and diversification of the National Board of Directors with the addition of new at large seats
- ◆ increased financial stability and diversification of funds.

ASPIRA's growing national impact on educational policy and in the national arena.

Hasta luego

Our accomplishments are testament to ASPIRA's ability to bring together volunteers, students, parents, and staff around a mission and goals that seek to advance our community through self help. ASPIRA's mission is rooted in a belief in the talents of our children and our collective responsibility as Puerto Ricans and Latinos to help develop these talents to their fullest.

"I say goodbye from this chair I occupy which has given me such joys and some headaches, where I have made many friends and hopefully no enemies."

-Janice Petrovich

We continue to work to open doors as we prepare our youth to walk through these doors. Clearly, to work with youth means to be an advocate.

ASPIRA's organizational accomplishments are many. We have worked with tens of thousands of people who maintain great pride in being Aspirantes. Most of the Puerto Rican leadership in this country has been involved with ASPIRA. Nevertheless, the need

for ASPIRA and the demand for our services has only grown during our 32-year organizational history. As the population of Latinos in this country grows within persistent conditions of racism and poverty, there still is a chronic need for ASPIRA.

Our access to high levels of the federal government has included meeting with most Department Secretaries and meetings with Presidents Bush and Clinton. However, Puerto Ricans and other Latinos do not yet have the collective voice and impact that our growing population deserves—not in the federal government and not in any of society's institutions. We all clearly need to continue to strive to open doors.

So I say goodbye from this chair I occupy which has given me such joys and some headaches, where I have made many friends and hopefully no enemies. Now I will be in the strange position of being on the giving end, rather than the asking end. My friends in the philanthropic community assure me that the job is no easier. I can't believe them just yet.

Thank you for your support through the years. *Seguimos adelante.*



In Brief

A SPIRA of Connecticut, Inc. has a new chairperson for the Board of Directors, as **César Batalla** of Bridgeport takes over from **Ana Maria Garcia**. . . The Connecticut affiliate has received local funding to continue its ASPIRA Mathematics and Science Academy in Bridgeport, as well as sponsoring ASPIRA Clubs in each of the city's high schools. They have also received a grant to develop a long-range plan for work in New Haven. . . As Connecticut moves to regionalize its school districts, the ASPIRA chapter is advocating for

News from Associates

continued attention to the needs of Latino children and families.

Raúl Martínez, Executive Director of **ASPIRA of Florida, Inc.**, contributed to the Third National Conference of the Youth Gang Drug Prevention Program on October 19 and 20. He presented a workshop called "Building Cultural Bridges" which focused on the need to provide youth with the knowledge, skills, and experiential base to survive the urban crisis. . . Accolade, the ASPIRA Alternative Middle School, celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with Caribbean dances choreographed by **Elsa Torres**, science teacher for Accolade. Several students at Accolade

took advantage of the opportunity to participate in this lively tradition.

Motivated by their concern for issues concerning Hispanic women, **ASPIRA, Inc. of Illinois** has started a young women's organization called the **Antonia Pantoja Club**. The club will be an open forum where young Latinas can discuss issues relevant to society and to their lives. Latinas will be encouraged to be active participants in their communities and to pursue career choices that have historically not been open to women. The club is named after ASPIRA founder **Dr. Antonia Pantoja**.

Continued on next page

ASPIRA parents win elections (continued from page 1)

the training, APEX trainers provided the parents with technical assistance on campaigning and publicity.

Election of parents into Local School Councils is part of Chicago's broad-based educational reform movement. The decentrali-

zation of decision-making down to the local school level has increased the number of Hispanic policymakers in Chicago by over 700, and they seem to be making a difference. According to a recent study of the Local School Councils, schools with predominantly Hispanic populations were the most likely to sustain the active involvement of principals, teachers, and parents, and were the most likely to be pursuing comprehensive, systemic change. Researchers speculated that predominantly Hispanic schools can draw on the strong "social resources" of Hispanic community organizations, churches, and families.

Parents elected to the Local School Council:

Hilda Rivera	Clemente High School
Delia Garcia	Chopin Elementary School
Rosa Esteves	Chopin Elementary School
Juana Garcia	Cameron Elementary School
Mildred Bernal	Chopin Elementary School
Maria Rodriguez	Clemente High School
Lucy Rodriguez	Clemente High School
Josefina Sanchez	Clemente High School

Parents elected to the Bilingual Committee:

Mildred Bernal	President of the Bilingual Committee
Eudelia Castilla	District Delegate
Daisy Crespin	Board of Education Delegate
Rosa Esteves	Secretary

Parents elected to the Chapter One committee:

Delia Garcia	Chopin Elementary School
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More Associate News

ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania received a \$50,000 grant from the State Department of Education to continue providing counseling services to Latino youth... This summer, 112 Latino high school students explored opportunities in the private sector. The students were monitored by eight college students, who counseled them on their placement and career interest. Fifty-four of the students were hired for employment after completion of the program... "Proyecto Alcanace" earned the State of Pennsylvania's Outstanding Program Performance Award for extraordinary services to at-risk students. **Evelyn Briganty** and **Ana Maria Zayas's** project participants attained a 100% school retention rate... **Orlando Rendón**, a Business Administration sophomore at Temple University and 1991 ASPIRA Alumnus, was selected as a recipient of the Latino Leadership Institute Scholarship. Orlando will intern with the Institute for approximately six months and will receive \$1,000.

ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey presented an extraordinary conference on the condition of Latino males November 19 at Trenton State College. The conference, called "The Plight of Latino Males: Strategies for Action," presented current issues and introduced solutions. **Dr. Angelo Falcón**, an Aspirante and Director of the Institute for Puerto Rican Policy

and Research, headed the statewide panel discussion of issues affecting the Latino family.

Daniel Agosto is the new Chairperson of the Board of Directors for **ASPIRA of New York, Inc.** Agosto was an Aspirante in high school and has been a member of the ASPIRA of New York Board of Directors since 1990. He has a record of serving the Latino community... Project ADEPT is the new career readiness program sponsored in part by the NYC Department of Employment. The program provides academic assistance, work seminars, and after-school internships in public and private sector organizations.

ASPIRA, Inc. de Puerto Rico prepared over 1,200 high school seniors for college entrance examinations in October. The number of students served far surpassed the established goals... In October and November the office concentrated efforts on the recruitment of 7th and 8th graders to provide them with motivational counseling, tutoring and other services to encourage them to keep enrolled in school and set post-secondary education goals... ASPIRA of Puerto Rico provided tutoring in Spanish, English, Mathematics and Science on Saturdays to low achieving students throughout the fall.

The **ASPIRA National Office** has experienced a number of staff changes in the past few months. **Hilda Crespo**, Director of Education and Federal Affairs and an eight-year ASPIRA employee, has assumed the position of Interim National Executive Director as **Janice Petrovich** relocates to The Ford Foundation (see article, p. 2). **Grant Vitale** has moved up to become Manager of Youth Leadership and Community Service, replacing **Mirka Negroni**, who has moved back to Puerto Rico. Mirka will continue as a consultant to the ASPIRA Alumni Association. The office also welcomes new program assistants **Miguel Bonilla**, **Mary Busch**, and **Elena Silva**... The Miranda Foundation has established a scholarship for an outstanding Puerto Rican student participating in the ASPIRA Public Policy Leadership Program (APPLP). The Foundation will award the first \$500 scholarship to one of the APPLP National Interns at their graduation ceremony next July... The Challenger Center for Space Science donated 10 of their new Mars City Alpha kits to ASPIRA's Mathematics and Science Initiative. Mars City Alpha is a classroom simulation encouraging middle school students to develop their math/science, team building, and creative abilities as they plan a city on Mars.

New support for Latinos in health

Increasing the number of Latinos and other minorities entering and completing their education in the health professions is the focus of the ASPIRA National Health Careers Program, which recently received a renewal grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The three-year grant of \$846,234 funds the most recent cycle of ASPIRA's 19-year old program, which serves 800 students per year in five sites.

Since its inception, the ASPIRA National Health Careers Program has placed 995 students in medical and health professions schools. The majority of these students come from low income families or from environments that inhibit success in a health professions school.

Approximately 65 percent of the students served in the past year were female and 35 percent

were male. Ninety percent of the students served resided in the major metropolitan areas of New York City, Philadelphia, Newark, Chicago, and San Juan.

Recently published statistics on the number of Latinos entering medical schools in 1993 show there is still a tremendous need for programs such as ASPIRA's. Hispanics make up over 9% of the national population, but they were only 6% of accepted applicants in 1993.

The National Health Careers program recruits Hispanic and other minority high school seniors and college students, provides information, counseling, support, and opportunities to interact with health professionals, facilitates entry into health professional schools, and disseminates financial aid information to those interested in health professions.

One unique facet of the program is its focus on encouraging students to utilize their skills to improve the health conditions of their community.

"ASPIRA remains committed to improving Latino health care by increasing the number of Hispanics entering and graduating from medical and health professions schools," said Hilda Crespo, who directs the Health Careers Program.

The Department of Health and Human Services Division of Disadvantaged Assistance Bureau of Health Professions awarded ASPIRA the grant through its "Health Careers Opportunity Program." The Department of Health and Human Services has funded ASPIRA's National Health Careers Program for 19 consecutive years.

New study focuses on impact of informal math and science programs

The impact of informal math and science programs on Latino middle school youth is the focus of a new ASPIRA study sponsored by a \$76,000 research grant from the National Science Foundation. The study begins this academic year.

Hilda Crespo, Director of Education and Federal Affairs, said information obtained in the study will eventually be disseminated nationally. Crespo said she hopes the information will be

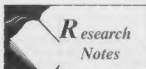
useful to other institutions in developing effective programs for Latinos.

"ASPIRA's concern is for opening educational opportunities to increase Hispanic participation in mathematics and science. We are interested in finding out what is being done," said Crespo.

The ASPIRA study will identify community programs and curricula that have served as models of effective informal

science programs for Latino youth. The study will recognize resources for supporting informal science education programs and encourage partnerships among community based organizations, educators, schools and families.

Currently, ASPIRA's informal science programs operate in Chicago, Illinois; Bridgeport, Connecticut; and Miami, Florida.



With this issue of ASPIRA News, we are beginning a new column summarizing recent research or analyses of issues affecting Latino youth.

Eight percent of Texas first graders, and nine percent of Hispanic first graders, were kept from advancing to second grade in the 1992-93 school year. Twelve percent of ninth graders, and 17.5 percent of Hispanic ninth graders, were similarly retained. In all grades except kindergarten, blacks and Hispanics were much more likely to be retained than white students.

These are some of the findings noted in an Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) analysis of retention patterns in Texas schools, published in their August 1993 *IDRA Newsletter*.

Examining data from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), IDRA reported that the majority of students were retained due to a low grade point average, with fewer students retained due to excessive absences or poor performance on tests. Nine of ten students who were retained in grade in 1992-93

In-grade retention common, costly

were over-age for their grade level. Being over-age has been shown to play a role in dropping out of school, and the Texas data seem to bear this out. The TEA staff observed that while the percentage of over-age retainees declined in the upper grades, this is not because they are doing better in school but because many over-age students drop out.

IDRA notes that in-grade

In addition, in-grade retention is one of the least cost-effective ways to support children educationally. For every student retained in grade, the state of Texas must spend an extra \$4400. This means that Texas spent an extra \$519,200,000 during the last school year to educate students who were repeating a grade.

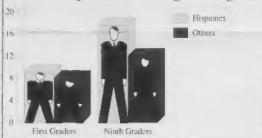
A more effective approach, both for the student and the school,

would be to target a limited amount of money on preventive assistance to students having trouble with certain subjects. Up-front tutoring, not too late retention, would benefit many more students, and save many more dollars.

For further information, contact

Dr. Albert Cortez, IDRA, 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, TX 78228.

Students kept from advancing to next grade



retention is beneficial to neither the child nor the school. These findings continue to uphold what ASPIRA reported in a seminal national study of Puerto Rican students in 1976: that retention does not improve subsequent student performance and in fact is highly correlated to later dropping out. Research also shows that threatening students with retention in order to encourage learning does not produce desired outcomes.

Aspirante News:

Congratulations to Wilfredo Carabello, Aspirante from New Jersey who was recently named President of the Hispanic National Bar Association and to Ninfa Segarra, Aspirante from New York, who has been named Deputy Mayor for Community Service by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.



Facing the Facts

A Review of Hispanic Health Data 1994

*A Fact Sheet produced by the
ASPIRA National Health Careers Program*

Hispanic Representation in Health Fields

● According to the 1990 U.S. Census, Hispanics comprise 9.0% of the total population. In the field of health, however, Hispanics represent only 4.9% of all physicians, 1.7% of dentists, 5.3% of health administrators and nutritionists, 2.9% of registered nurses, and 2.8% of Public Health Service employees. (Bureau of Census, 1990)

● Hispanics represent only 5.2% of students enrolled in medical education in the fall of 1993. Mexican-Americans are 2.3% and Puerto Ricans are 1.9% of all enrollees. (Association of American Medical Colleges, November, 1993)

● Less than three percent (2.5%) of faculty members in American medical schools are Hispanic. Mexican-Americans are 0.3%, Puerto Ricans are 0.7%, and other Hispanics are 1.5% of all faculty. (Association of American Medical Colleges, November, 1993)

Access to Health Care

● Hispanics are more often employed in jobs without health insurance benefits than are Whites. If Hispanics had the same rate of coverage as Whites, the percentage of Hispanics with no insurance at all would drop from 35% to 18%. (National Center for Health Services Research and Health Care Technology Assessment, NMES, 1987)

● Hispanics are the single group most likely to be uninsured. The latest Census figures indicate that in 1992, 33% of Hispanics were uninsured, compared to 14% of Whites and 20% of Blacks. (Congressional Hispanic Caucus News Release, 1993)



Dr. Maria Segarra, Office of Minority Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Dr. Elogio Gonzalez, optometrist at Bronx-Lebanon Hospital, talk seriously about Latino health issues during an ASPIRA Health Careers panel meeting.

● Hispanics often lack a regular source of health care: 64% of all Hispanics have a regular source of care compared with 80% of the total population. (Healthy People 2000, Sept. 1990)

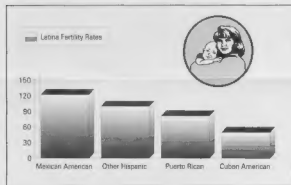
● Hispanics often receive medical attention in an emergency room, and thus do not receive proper screening or prevention treatment. Nearly 10% of Hispanics identified the hospital emergency room as a regular source of medical care compared with 4% of White non-Hispanics. (Congressional Hispanic Caucus News Release, 1993)

Maternal and Child Health

●As the graph below indicates, the fertility rates for Latino subgroups in 1991 per 1,000 women ages 15-44, were:

Mexican-American	121.6
Puerto Rican	80.9
Cuban American	49.1
other Hispanic	99.3

(National Center for Health Statistics, 1991)



●Infant mortality figures for 1991 include Mexican American, 3,057; Puerto Rican, 371; Cuban American, 63; Central and South American, 270; other Hispanic, 543; White, 18,018; African American, 10,840 deaths. (National Center for Health Statistics, 1991)

●Sixty-three percent of Hispanic mothers begin prenatal care in the first trimester, as do 81% of White women and 61.5% of African-Americans. Within the Hispanic subgroups, 58.7% of Mexican-Americans, 65.0% of Puerto Ricans, 85.4% of Cuban

Americans, and 53.4% of Central and South Americans begin prenatal care in their first trimester. (National Center for Health Statistics, 1991)

Substance Abuse

●In a 1988 study of 27 metropolitan areas in the United States, 13% of drug-related deaths occurred among Hispanics. (NIDA, 1990)

●Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis is the 6th leading cause of death for Hispanic men, at 43%.

●Forty-one percent of Mexican Americans who died from alcohol-related problems did so before age 50, compared to 30% of Whites who died from alcohol-related problems. (National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, 1992)

●In 1993, 29% of Hispanics reported they had ever used an illicit drug, while 10.8% had used an illicit drug in the past year and 5.3% had used an illicit drug in the past month. 9.7% of Hispanics had ever used cocaine, while 3.7% of Hispanics

had used in the past year, and 1.2% Hispanics had used in the past month. (National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, 1992)

●Puerto Ricans and Cuban Americans aged 12 through 17 report higher rates of cocaine use than do either whites or blacks, and Mexican Americans have higher rates of marijuana use. (National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, 1988)

●Of Hispanics who use drugs intravenously, about 41% have never been in treatment. Relatively high proportions of Hispanic clients were reported in Arizona, California, New Mexico, New York, and Texas. (National Drug and Alcoholism Treatment Unit Survey-1987 Final Report, NIDA; NIDA AIDS Demonstration Research National Database, November 1989)

●Hispanic teenagers of both genders smoke more than do either non-Hispanic black or non-Hispanic white teenagers. Similarly, Hispanic teenagers report heavy drinking of alcoholic beverages more frequently than do white or black teenagers. (National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations, 1988)

AIDS and Hispanics

●Hispanics, while representing approximately 9% of the U.S. population, account for 16.5% of all AIDS cases. (CDC, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, March 1993)

●As of 1993, Hispanic women accounted for 20.4% of women diagnosed with AIDS, while Hispanic men accounted for 15.9% of all men diagnosed as having AIDS. (CDC's quarterly HIV/AIDS surveillance report, March 1993)

●AIDS is the sixth most frequent cause of death for Hispanics and the eighth most frequent cause of death for Whites. (CDC, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, March 1993)

●Hispanic children under 13 account for 24.2% (1,082) of total reported pediatric AIDS cases. (CDC, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, March 1993)

●Of the 491 Hispanic children under the age of 13

who had developed AIDS by December, 1989, more than 70% were born to mothers whose risk for contracting the HIV infection had been associated with their own intravenous drug abuse or sex with an intravenous drug abuser. (CDC, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, January 1990)

Hispanic Elderly

●Nationally, heart disease is the number one cause of death for Hispanics (38.3%) and whites (41.7%), ages 65 and over. (National Center for Health Statistics, 1989)

●Twice as many Hispanic elderly die of diabetes, chronic liver disease, and cirrhosis than non-Hispanics. 1.3 million Hispanics over the age of 21, or 10% of the adult Hispanic population, have diabetes. (National Center for Health Statistics, 1989)

Migrant Farm Workers

●The infant mortality rate among migrant farm workers is 25% higher than the national average. (Monthly Vital Statistics Report Supplement, September 26, 1989)

●The average life expectancy for a migrant farm worker is 49 years, as compared to the national life expectancy of 75 years. (Monthly Vital Statistics Report Supplement, September 26, 1989)

●The rate of parasitic infection in migrant farm workers is 50 times that of the total population. (Monthly Vital Statistics Report Supplement, September 26, 1989)

Leading Causes of Death

● The following chart shows leading causes of death for Hispanics and white non-Hispanics in 18 states and the District of the Columbia, as a percent of total

information include unreliable Hispanic origin statistics reported by the states, lack of critical patient level information, and noninclusion of Hispanic identifiers. In summary, there has been insufficient analysis of Hispanic health data to provide decisive results, especially in regard to morbidity and mortality.

The Ten Leading Causes of Death

Rank	Hispanics	White non-Hispanics	
1	Heart Disease 25%	Heart Disease 37%	
2	Cancer 17%	Cancer 23%	
3	Injuries 9%	Stroke 7%	
4	Stroke 6%	Chronic Lung Disease 4%	
5	Homicide 5%	Injuries 4%	
6	Liver Disease 3%	Pneumonia/Influenza 4%	
7	Pneumonia/Influenza 3%	Diabetes 2%	
8	Diabetes 3%	Suicide 2%	
9	HIV Infection 3%	Atherosclerosis 1%	
10	Perinatal conditions 3%	Liver Disease 1%	

Monthly Vital Statistics Report Supplement September 26, 1989

deaths in 1987. (It should be noted that more recent data from the Centers for Disease Control show the ascent of AIDS in the rank of leading causes of death for both Hispanics and non-Hispanics.)

Availability of Hispanic Health Data

The first comprehensive survey of Hispanic health was the Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (HHANES) conducted in 1982-84. The next HHANES survey, however, will not be completed until later in 1994. Other surveys and records available, such as the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), lack precise information on Hispanic subgroups or are not up to date. Additional barriers to the availability of accurate national Hispanic health

This publication was produced for the ASPIRA National Health Careers Program, which is 100% funded by the Health Careers Opportunity Program of the U.S. Public Health Service under grant #1-D18-MB02170-01 in the amount of \$282,078 for the 1993 program year. This publication was prepared by Hilda Crespo and Nadine Cid.

Sources:

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- Congressional Hispanic Caucus News Release, 1993
- Healthy People, 2000*. U.S. Government Printing Office, September 1990
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- National Center for Health Services Research and Health Care Technology Assessment, 1987
- National Center for Health Statistics, 1991



Legislative Update

The U.S. Congress will spend much of its education time in the 1994 congressional year reauthorizing programs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); the \$ 10-billion federal legislation encompasses most K-12 education programs. The ESEA includes programs such as Chapter 1, which reaches 5.5 million disadvantaged children, the Bilingual Education Act, migrant and immigrant education programs, and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act.

The Clinton Administration presented its version of what it would like to see in the ESEA in September. The Administration bill has five central themes:

- ◆ high standards for all students and schools,
- ◆ improved and expanded teacher training,
- ◆ local flexibility coupled with accountability for students' performance,
- ◆ school and community linkages through enhanced parental involvement, integration of social services and education, and partnerships for safe and drug-free schools, and
- ◆ resources that are targeted to the neediest populations.

Among its new proposals are

Elementary/Secondary programs under scrutiny

an overhaul of the Chapter 1 program, ending the status quo of remedial tutoring in pull-out classes and dollars spread thinly over nearly every school district in the country. Instead, the Administration proposes targeting more funds to the most needy schools, promoting more school-wide programs, and ensuring that Chapter 1 students receive an enriched academic program that

- for violence prevention strategies;
- 3) providing technical assistance to states and local communities to ensure equitable allocation of their resources;
- 4) strengthening true bilingual programs and encouraging state, school-wide and secondary-level programs.

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measures their improvement against the same high standards as their non-Chapter 1 peers.

Other Administration proposals include:

- 1) combining Chapter 2 block grants and the Eisenhower Math and Science Program into a professional development program for teachers;
- 2) expanding the drug-free schools programs to also provide funds to schools and communities

As a complement to the Administration proposal, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus introduced in October the Equal Access to Education Act. The bill proposes changes to enhance the quality of services provided to minority

English proficient students in the Chapter 1 program and the Bilingual Education Act. It was introduced by a unified Hispanic Caucus in the wake of its successful effort last year to improve Latino access to higher education programs.

The Caucus bill, which was developed with the support of major national Hispanic organizations, including ASPIRA, improves upon both current law and

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ASPIRA fills delayed school gap

A financial crisis delayed the opening of the Chicago Public Schools this fall, but ASPIRA of Illinois stepped in to help fill the gap for Latino children. The office provided free educational and recreational classes primarily for elementary school children in the community. For a week in September, ASPIRA held classes in their offices, Monday through Friday from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. The educational program offered courses in math, science, art, music, physical education, and improvement of study habits.

"We used all our resources," said Michelle Santiago, an ASPIRA of Illinois staff member who taught a recreation class

for staff did a variety of jobs. We had access to teachers so they taught math and science. We have a staff member who is in a music band so he taught music. Every body pitched in."

Santiago said parents expressed gratitude for ASPIRA's participation. She said they received positive reactions from parents concerned about their children's welfare.

"The parents were happy because their children were not wasting time," said Santiago. "They could go to work without worrying about their children. Parents were happy because the kids were happy."

Demand for the free classes

was so high that ASPIRA had to turn some students away because the office did not have the capacity to deal with more students. The demand increased when ASPIRA was announced as an alternative program by the media but the office was prepared to deal with the situation for as long as it was needed, according to Santiago.

The delay in the opening of the nation's fourth-largest school system was due to an ongoing battle with state officials over a fiscal deficit in the Chicago Public Schools, compounded by a breakdown in negotiations with the Chicago teachers union. School resumed a week late under a federal mandate, but the system remains on shaky ground.

Legislative Update, continued

the Administration bill by addressing the specific needs of limited-English proficient students. It details what services are needed for the marginalized limited-English population in order to realize the Administration's broad call to include all students in school reform. Hispanics make up about 80% of the limited-English proficient population.

Specifically, the Caucus bill would in Chapter 1:

- ◆ remove language from current law casting doubt on limited-English-proficient children's eligibility for Chapter 1
- ◆ establish fair assessments to measure all students' performance

to high standard levels,

- ◆ train Chapter 1 teachers to work with language minority populations, and
- ◆ require schools with large language minority populations to include these children and their parents in the school's school-wide plan for reform.

In Bilingual Education, the Caucus bill would:

- ◆ promote programs that encourage both English and native language proficiency
- ◆ encourage school-wide and secondary-level programs
- ◆ increase the number of bilingual educators, and
- ◆ strengthen the research and

technical assistance necessary to improve programs.

The House of Representatives has held a series of hearings on the ESEA over the past several months. They will begin debating their own version of the ESEA in late winter. The Senate will develop its version in the spring. Throughout this period, members of the Hispanic community will be working with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and others to promote the inclusion of elements of the Caucus bill into the final versions of the ESEA.

Young Aspirante shines brightly

"I don't know how to ask you this but... I want to be successful and I don't know how," a small girl in pigtails nervously asked in a school auditorium.



The room with seven hundred young Latino students grew silent.

"I know you're going to be successful just because you had the nerve to stand up," said Aspirante and City of Chicago Treasurer Miriam Santos. "By virtue of the fact that you want to learn you will be successful."

This was the scene at a recent speech by Santos at a Chicago elementary school. Although Santos is known nationally for her accomplishments as Chicago treasurer and as the first Hispanic to hold this high of an office in Chicago, her achievements as an active community leader are less well known.

"I go out to communities, to high schools and elementary schools, and I'm both overwhelmed and saddened by some experiences," said Santos. "I try to tell them where I'm from. I tell them I'm from Gary, Indiana and that my father was a steelworker. I try to show them that I'm just like them."

Santos' motivation is in part due to her experiences with ASPIRA. She said one thing

ASPIRA taught her was that she had many options available to her.

"If you're willing to work and you're willing to do the work, the opportunities will come to you," said Santos. "Right now I have a law degree and an MBA and I've had a variety of jobs because I feel I have choices in life."

ASPIRA was a source of inspiration for Santos but it also provided her with practical information on preparing for college when she was in high school. She first became acquainted with ASPIRA the summer after her high school graduation.

"They were wonderful!" said Santos. "They sent me to their office and they told me how to finance my education. They gave me advice on career choices and on the type of course work I should be thinking about. They made my first year in college human. They were really terrific."

During her college career Santos was a student representative on the ASPIRA of Illinois Board of Directors. She eventually worked her way through several positions and became Vice-chair of Programs for the National Board.

After she graduated from DePaul University Law School she worked in Washington, DC as Director of the ASPIRA Center for Educational Equity. She was an advocate for national youth programs.

"It was an opportunity to exercise legal and lobbying skills,"

said Santos. "It was my first management experience and it gave me a real opportunity to expand my horizons in terms of understanding how policy works and how to effect change in a complex system."

When Santos returned to Chicago, she participated in the mayoral campaign of Richard Daley. Once Daley was elected, she was appointed City Treasurer as part of his transition team to the position. She was later re-elected to the same position with an overwhelming 71% of the vote in a city-wide election.

"It was my experience in ASPIRA that motivated me to continue," said Santos. "I got bit by the bug. Once you saw how change is made you want to learn more about the process and want to be part of the process."

As City Treasurer, she has made some phenomenal changes. Santos has privatized a formerly costly employee check cashing system and has fully automated the office, resulting in more efficient investment practices and a cut in city banking fees of 55.2 percent. Her administration has saved \$7 million in investable city revenue.

Recently, Santos added to her growing number of honors an award from the National Society of Hispanic MBA's for her accomplishments in minority business outreach and economic development. Appropriately enough for this remarkable young woman, it was called the *Brilliant Award*.

Aspirante sets pace for progress

In the early sixties, civil rights was a growing issue on the Puerto Rican agenda. Luis Burguillo, an Aspirante from New York, got involved in the movement for Puerto Rican community empowerment at a young age. His recent appointment to the Clinton Administration is one more accomplishment in a life of politics and public service.

Burguillo, now a Senior Intergovernmental Relations Officer for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, first heard about ASPIRA in high school. ASPIRA provided him with the mechanism to prepare for college. Counselors gave him information on financial assistance, showed him how to objectively look at options, and helped him understand the application process.

He eventually chose the City University of New York at Brooklyn. His decision had far-reaching consequences for both the University and the Puerto Rican community. While an undergraduate, he helped establish the first Puerto Rican studies program in the country at CUNY-Brooklyn.

"We were progressive," said Burguillo. "The students interviewed the professors and looked at their applications; we were part of the process. It was really advanced for the time."

After Burguillo graduated from CUNY and Howard University's School of Law, he

worked as a Law Clerk for the National Bar Association in Washington, DC. He then worked as a Legislative Assistant for Congressman Robert García of the Bronx, where he became aware of the lack of Latinos in legislative affairs.

"I felt then like I feel now, Latinos are underrepresented in Congress," said Burguillo. "We need to hold our national organizations accountable for why we do not use the system. What we need to do is make the system work for us. Some of us don't even know our representatives. There is a whole world of making the system work for you and we as a people are totally lost."

Burguillo worked for Congressman García for two years before he joined the City of Chicago as a federal lobbyist. Besides representing the city on issues such as transportation, civil rights, housing, and environmental issues, he also helped establish a system to develop the city's agenda.

"We established this in 1985 and it is still used now," said Burguillo. "The system was basically a federal agenda encapsulating the issues of the city, positions on key legislation that the city is going to lobby on, and the impact the budget will have on those programs on the city. It was a comprehensive presentation of where the city is and how the budget will impact it and what will

be the result."

Currently, Burguillo is the Senior Intergovernmental Affairs Officer for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He is also an assistant to the Assistant Deputy Secretary, Choco Meza.

"The office of intergovernmental relations is the conduit or link between the Secretary, the Department, the locally elected officials, and the national interest groups who communicate with HUD at the local and national level. We are the link with them and the entire department," said Burguillo. "We are basically the Secretary's eyes and ears."

Although Burguillo's position in the Clinton Administration is envied by many, he feels more attention should be focused on educating Latino communities on their rights.

"I have two children and I have to think of them," said Burguillo. "As a federal government we need to educate people on what is out there so they can access it and make it work for them. By becoming informed, they become part of the picture and there is a sense of responsibility, a sense of respect."



**"Thanks to
ASPIRA's help,
I saw my dream
become reality."**

—Fernando Ferrer.

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Thank you to our sponsor, The ASPIRA Association, Inc., P.O. Box 15247, Washington, DC 20015.

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Hispanics give Clinton "D" on staffing

The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA) has lowered to a "D" its rating of President Bill Clinton's Hispanic hiring practices. As of October 15, 1993, President Clinton had nominated 259 people to senior-level government positions (those requiring Senate confirmation). Only 14 of the nominees are Hispanic.

The last NHLA report in May had given Clinton a "C". At that time, in a meeting with the NHLA chaired by ASPIRA director Dr. Janice Petrovich, the President had expressed the desire to receive an "A" on his next report as he continued the appoint-

ment process. However, with 76% of the top appointments now filled, the October report shows a senior staff that does not adequately represent the diversity of America.

"We met with the President last June and with most of the Cabinet secretaries in the spring, and we know many hundreds of resumes of outstanding Latinos were submitted," explained Petrovich, "yet we fail to see any real commitment that would allow Hispanics to participate fully in the administration. What's more, instead of seeing an improvement in the situation, we're losing ground."

The report stated that the number of Hispanic appointees (5.4%) is far below the proportion of Hispanics in the U.S. (9%). One third of the appointees are in just two agencies, HUD and Transportation. The Departments of Commerce, Energy, and State still have no Hispanic appointees.

Reaching the highest levels of participation in the policy-making process is as an important step in making change, according to Hispanic leaders.

The NHLA is a nonprofit, non-partisan coalition of distinguished Hispanic leaders throughout the nation.

Help ASPIRA Grow!

Contribute through the Combined Federal Campaign Fund

The ASPIRA Association Inc., is included in the 1993 Combined Federal Campaign National List. Our code number is 0809. Please consider ASPIRA in your federal contributions this year.

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